

Friends Meeting House
Salem City, Salem County, New Jersey

HABS-NJ-77

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
District of New Jersey

Historic American Buildings Survey
Seymour Williams, A.I.A., District Officer
133 Central Avenue, Rahway, New Jersey

Friends Meeting House
Salem City, Salem County, New Jersey

Owner: Society of Friends

Date of Erection: 1772

Architect: William Ellis

Builder: William Hancock

Present Condition: Good

Number of Stories: One with gallery

Materials of Construction: Foundation - stone

Exterior walls - brick

Interior walls - plaster

Roof - pitch, slate

Historical Data:

The Friends Meeting House is the oldest house of worship in Salem. In 1770 the members of Salem Monthly meeting bought a lot on East Broadway, then Fenwick Street, and William Hancock erected the meeting house. This was the third building that the Quakers had erected for their worship; the first two having been built on other sites. The first meeting had been held in 1676.

In 1778 this meeting house was used as a Court Room in a trial of Tories for confiscation of lands, high treason, using seditious words, and misdemeanors.

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The meeting house is now in the possession of the Hicksite branch of Friends; the Orthodox group erected their own house of worship across the street. Both used the same burial ground which contains the famous oak of Salem.

Bibliography:

Shourds, Thomas History and
Genealogy of Fenwick Colony
Bridgeton, G. F. Nixon, 1876

Clayton, Mary local historian

Mallett E. Pitt
Supervising Historian

Approved:
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